2: Maguire G-5 (ca. 1926) 1927-28
FLÁ Dorobo FLÁ

IL-TORŌBO

PART I

Being some Notes on the Various Types of *Dorobo*[1] found in the Masai Reserve of Tanganyika Territory and Contiguous Districts

The name Dorobo is a familiar one to almost every European in East Africa to-day. Nevertheless, beyond the fact that the Dorobo are commonly supposed to be a nomad tribe or clan of hunters living for the most part with, or near to the Masai, little would appear to be known about them. The Dorobo are referred to in many ethnical works of comparatively recent date, and they are mentioned in a number of books on African sport and travel, but I am unaware of any published work purporting to deal exclusively with these interesting people.

The following very incomplete notes on the Dorobo of Tanganyika Territory have been compiled from various sources,[2] but mainly from discussions with the Dorobo themselves, throughout Tanganyika Masailand. My chief informant has been "Jumbo" Lokito of the Talumai[3] *Il-Mirisho*. The death of this intelligent old man in July, 1926, deprived me of much interesting information.

During three years spent amongst the Masai I have had better opportunities than most people of getting to know the Dorobo. The peculiar conditions obtaining in a District such as Kilimanjaro, isolated in the middle of a vast area populated almost entirely

[1] I have called them *Dorobo* throughout, though it may be that certain sections would prefer *Aathombo* or *Wathombo*. I think it will be agreed that the latter, at any rate, is inadmissible. I have clung to the name without a prefix, as these notes look, perhaps, at the Dorobo through Masai eyes and the Masai, *Il-Torōbo*, *Il-Torōbo*, whose shoes of this article, is preferable. The initial D has been substituted for T as being more customary to the

[2] The authority consulted is quoted in every case.

[3] Talumai (or "Elyonge") as it is called by the Wanguu and Wadigiri of Handeni and also by the inhabitants of the small Swahi settlement District, notably, Wandanwi, is a range of hills to the north of and overlooking the main Kondoa-Handeni road, about 40 miles east of Kikuyu Station. Its map references are [illegible]. The name Talumai often primarily to the hills, whereas Elyonge is the settlement.

2:Maguire i-5 (ca. 1926) 1927-28
FL6 Dorobo FL6

race "without any great social coherence." This description admittedly tallies with the characteristics of the Tanganyika Dorobo of to-day, but the latter are, even now, violently opposed to fusion with the surrounding Bantu. This may be a characteristic acquired from the Masai, but it does not argue descent from the more accessible and less exclusive *Okiek*.[1]

The name "Irobo" would seem to have displeased more than one writer on these subjects. As Sir Claude Hollis says, the name has probably nothing to do with the Masai word *dorop*, short.[2] At any rate, I have been unable to discover any grounds for the belief that it has. The Masai, when asked, will always say that the Dorobo are so called on account of the resemblance the habits bear to those of the tsetse fly.[3] "The Dorobo," say the Masai, "live in the bush and used to prey on cattle in the old days. The tsetse fly lives in the bush and is one of the great enemies cattle have. In many places, Dorobo and tsetse fly are the principal inhabitants of a bush area. What other reason, then, is there for so calling the Dorobo?" We do not assert that there is no other reason for the name, but it will be agreed that we are not in possession of sufficient data to justify our writing it down as absurd. The derivation of the name "Dorobo" here given is at least as reasonable as that of the word "Swahili" cited in the last sentence of Bishop Steere's preface to the first edition of his *Swahili Handbook*.

Once it has been definitely established that Masailand was inhabited by more than one clan or tribe of Dorobo, an effort was made to obtain the names by which these clans or tribes were known. The Masai were singularly unhelpful in this regard, and I used to question them when I realised that their ignorance was great as my own. The Dorobo themselves were willing to answer all questions (when encouraged and at a loss for a reply they proved to be most powerful romancers), but were little better informed than the Masai. After many weary months suggestion and counter-suggestion, involving

[illegible] appeared that there were grounds for assuming the existence

[illegible]

[illegible] 900, 6900 — 900, 690.

2: Maguire G-5 (ca. 1926) 1927-28
FLÁ Dorobo FLÁ

of the following types of Dorobo.[1] I give the names in the singular and plural forms.[2]

Sing.	*Plur.*
1. Ol-Balafgi	Il-Balafga
2. Ol-Kinyalafgati	Il-Kinyalafgat
3. Ol-Méiroi	Il-Méiro[3]
4. Ol-Médiaki	Il-Médiak
5. Ol-Kisankasi	Il-Kisankasa
6. Ol-Aramanik	Il-Aramanik
7. Ol-Kitukurdai	Il-Kitukurda
8. Ol-Kisangura	Il-Kisangura

These names, all preceded by the Masai article, would seem to be the only ones known to the members of the types they represent. It is possible that there may have been other names in existence originally, and that many years in close contact with the Masai have had the effect of reducing some of these names to the Masai idiom. On this it is not possible to give an opinion, owing to the complete lack of information on the subject.

The names of the types of Dorobo having been ascertained, it remained to establish contact with some individuals of each type. In this I have been moderately successful. An added incentive to my efforts was the fact that the *Méiro* Dorobo, who live in considerable numbers in the vicinity of Talamai, were discovered to have a language of their own. This language is almost wholly unintelligible to the Masai. On being questioned, the *Méiro* admitted their ability to converse in a tongue unknown to the Masai, but stated that there were other Dorobo[4] whose language they (the *Méiro*) did not know.[5]

[1] I do not call them clans. I think it will be agreed, later, that their membership is more distinct than that between clans or families. The Ol-Kipiro [illegible] entirely an distinct and different tribe.

[2] The singular would represent an individual of the type and the plural the type as a whole.

[3] According to Hollis, *Il-Méiro* is the name given to a clan of the Chaga people by the Kwavi Masai. I have not heard the name used in this connection by the Masai of the Ngongonyiro District. [4] *Il-Aramanik*.

[5] It might be of interest, in this connection, to recall the fact that the

3:Huntingford E-5 (1921-1928)1929 FLA Dorobo FLA

MODERN HUNTERS: SOME ACCOUNT OF THE KÂMELILO-KÂPCHERPKENDI DORÓBO (OKIEK) OF KENYA COLONY.

[With Plates XXVI-XXVIII.]

By G. W. B. Huntingford.

[With an account of the Physical Features by the Rev. P. L. O'Brien, M.A.]

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Preliminary Note.

These pages [illegible] information collected in Eastern Nandi (particularly at Kimwilla and Kâpchepkendi), where this section of the Dorobo live. When visiting this district, I was accompanied by the Rev. P. L. O'Brien, M.A., to whom I am indebted for the account of the Physical Features, which is given on p. 374. My information was obtained through the medium of Nandi—which the Dorobo speak, even among themselves, and almost as [illegible] Dorobo children of the Kâpchepkendi type. The present work also [illegible] an [illegible] Nandi figure, a Dorobo chief, whose acquaintance I made through his son Chemaiko, now at

Schoningsford E-1 (1938-1939) 1954 IFLA Dorobo IFLA

The Political Organization of the Dorobo

By G. W. B. Huntingford, B. Sc.

Contents:

1. The Effect of Contact with the Nandi
2. The Clan and its Place in Public Life
3. The Koret
4. Crime and its Results
5. Religion and Magic
   a) Belief and Practice
   b) Analysis of Beliefs

1. The Effect of Contact with the Nandi

Although the wording of a Dorobo text suggests that the Dorobo[1] were originally in contact with the Maasai before the Nandi appeared on the scene[2], nevertheless before 1850 the effective outside contacts of the Dorobo were mainly with the Nandi, and their political system has acquired an much superficial resemblance to that of the Nandi that any investigation of the Dorobo system must begin with a short survey of the contact between the two peoples. Since the establishment of relations between the Dorobo and the Nandi (in particular those of 10 Nandi and their blacksmiths), there has been, with certain reservations, a state of friendliness between the two peoples. The Nandi have always tolerated the Dorobo so long as they live outside Nandi, and have always been half afraid of them as rainmakers and magicians; the Dorobo in turn fear the Nandi because they are a group much larger and stronger than they themselves are.

The two groups thus brought into contact are of very unequal size (the population of the Nandi is close on 60,000), and of unequal achievement

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

There of course are relatively small settlements, but there were many people living round and inside the forest in 1937, and a number of these has been scattered owing to the effect of the 1937 move. The manner in which the settlements are distributed may be seen from the map.

5. The Forest

The methods by which primitive people govern themselves and maintain law and order can usually be studied in operation, even if they are not immediately obvious to the casual visitor. The observation of customs facts and events can elucidate even the unconscious organizations that are so difficult to understand, and so common in East Africa, where there may often be no chiefs, and no visible authority but groups of old men. Some of the most important peoples of Kenya, like the Nandi, Kipsigis, and Kikuyu had systems of this type, and the Dorobo also were similarly organized. But in the case of the Dorobo the difficulties in the way of investigation were greatly increased as a result of the move of 1937, an action which it was hoped would place the Dorobo in more favourable conditions and increase their chances not only of cultural advancement, but of ultimate survival; and in 1938 I was told that no local council had been held since before 1937. I was therefore unable to observe this aspect of Dorobo life, and the account of their present organization that follows is based on their own statements. Information was obtained from a number of senior Dorobo, and it was possible to check their statements to a certain extent, as their views in conjunction with the information I collected in 1937 the somewhat slight and unsatisfactory incomplete picture is, I think, correct as far as it goes.

The Dorobo are divided into three age-grades: elderest, elders, eleventh, circumcised men, and girls, boys. The elderest and eleventh are those who take part in public affairs, until have no voice in them. Women, too, though they have the grades of eighteenth, old women, eighth, married women, and eighth girls, have no official share in public affairs, however much influence they may have at home over their husbands and relatives. Neither they nor boys may attend council meetings, unless they happen to be major participants in some affair, as for instance, when a widow accuses someone of an offence against her.

The Dorobo divide their forest country into a number of districts called *kwet*, pl. *kwenuak*. The names of nine districts are recorded, and these are, from north to south:

1. Ungoror, on the northern edge of the forest.
2. Kolgori, also, Ol-Longai.
3. Kipkenyon, from Kisa to the NW corner of the forest.
4. Sakutiek, east of Kipkenyon.
5. Mosobut, between the forest and the Mosobut river.
6. Kolongolo, east of Kipkenyon.
7. Piyeri, east of Kisa.
8. Kimujuk, east of Kisa.

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible]

/50 cont'd/

	Zaramo	Shambala	Digo:
[illegible]	kwanaka	pfanaka	(zi-mbwa)
[illegible]	(gwiko)kwanaka	(mugwiko)	
[illegible]	dong'o		'i-no-ng'o (the stubborn)
[illegible]	(gwa, kugwa)		zi-kokuya
[illegible]	ngoma (pl.)	dzoma (pl.)	
[illegible]	Kong'wanda (pl.)		
[illegible]	nyuzu (pl. izuzu)		'i-nyuzu (the hairy one)/51/
mono	nyuma	nya	
gu	zi	zi	
kuliwa	nyua		
buy	zi	zi (zi)	
nyi	ovili		
mwi	mwili	mwili	
ka	ndi	ndi	

Complete accuracy is not claimed for this list of Zaramo words; accuracy is not easy when one is dealing with aged men with extensive vocabularies. They are so apt to answer to long questions about definitive names the words are even not mentioned under a mass of verbiage entirely unintelligible to one not previously acquainted with their language. But the list is sufficiently accurate to fulfil its purpose, which is to relate the speech of these Swahilis to some other dialect of such a relationship exists in fact.

Mr. And that, I think, is just about as far as we can go towards an ethnological synopsis of the Swahili people in the present state of [illegible] people who received their training culture when the use of them assumed a settled partnership in agriculture. But what these people were we cannot yet say. The many evidences we have given to their being something other than a Bantu-speaking tribe, and this theories of a Hamitic type would seem to fit the facts as well as any. It would be, surely to have our findings on their language, but if we cannot receive a rich of Bantu immigrations from the east and this theories